

WASHINGTON, DC - On Saturday, May 29, 2004, Congressman Steny Hoyer will attend the WWII Memorial Dedication Ceremony. He has invited Senator Bernie Fowler, WWII veteran from Maryland; Thomas Davis, Maryland Department Adjutant for the American Legion; and Joseph and Irene Ford, the father and stepmother of Army Private First Class Jason Ford, who was killed in Iraq earlier this year, as his personal guests. Congressman Hoyer released the following statement today:

"I look forward to joining hundreds of thousands of World War II veterans and their families who will be in Washington for the opening and dedication of the World War II Memorial on the National Mall this weekend.

"This memorial is being dedicated in honor of the 16 million men and women who served in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II, the more than 400,000 who died, and the millions who supported the war effort from the home front.

"I am especially pleased to celebrate this historic event with my friends Tom Davis, Department Adjutant for the American Legion and a veteran leader in our state, and former state Senator Bernie Fowler who served in the U.S. Navy during WWII in the South Pacific and was awarded the Asiatic-Pacific, American Theatre, and Victory Medals for his service. Both Senator Fowler and Mr. Davis selflessly answered their nation's call to service and continue to work to further the cause of veterans. Their bravery and sacrifice for our nation, and their continued commitment to their communities deserves our recognition, our respect and our deep gratitude.

"I am grateful for the opportunity this weekend to publicly thank the World War II generation for their service and sacrifices, but as we memorialize the American patriots who have defended freedom, we also especially remember Army Specialist Jason Ford from Bowie, Maryland who made the ultimate sacrifice for our nation and the principles for which we stand - liberty, justice, equality and decency.

"I am especially pleased that Joseph and Irene Ford could join me today as we honor the bravery and devotion of all of the men and women who make up our nation's armed forces. There is no more compelling way to understand the contributions of brave Americans like Jason Ford, than to hear it from family members themselves and I am grateful to be joined by Joe and Irene today.

"We must never forget the magnitude of the deeds and sacrifices of the soldiers, sailors, and airmen who have courageously served our country. The National World War II Memorial will stand as an important symbol of American unity and a timeless reminder of a generation who bore the burden of defending our nation, but gave to their successors the chance for freedom by protecting the foundation upon which our country stands."

See below for a list of the events Congressman Hoyer will attend on Saturday, May 29, to celebrate the opening of the WWII Memorial with veterans and their families.

8:00 a.m. American Legion National Dedication Day Prayer Breakfast

Mayflower Hotel

1127 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, DC

10:00 a.m. Interfaith Service at the Washington National Cathedral

2:00 p.m. World War II Memorial Dedication Ceremony

4:00 p.m. Stories of Service Panel Discussion

Veterans History Project Pavilion

National Mall

5:30 p.m. Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Reception

JW Marriott Hotel

1331 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC

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